Ontario
Ministry of
Community and
Social Services

June 1984

Day care initiatives:

Funding guidelines

INTRODUCTION

In December 1980, the Minister of Community and Social Services announced the Day Care Initiatives Program reflecting a comprehensive policy of support and innovation in the field of day care.

The Day Care Initiatives outlined in these funding guidelines are the following:

- Informal Care Initiative
- Public Education Initiative
- Private Home Day Care Initiative
- Family Group Care Initiative
- Operational Start-Up Assistance to Non-Profit Day Nurseries
- Capital Assistance to Non-Profit Day Nurseries

In keeping with the Ministry's commitment to decentralization, funding decisions for the initiatives will be made by the local offices and all enquiries and proposals should be directed to these offices (see page 24). The funding guidelines set out the overall purposes and criteria that will be used in reviewing proposals across the province. However, each region will have the discretion to modify and supplement these guidelines to suit local needs and circumstances.

Funding for these projects will be provided under The Ministry of Community and Social Services Act, which permits a broad spectrum of funding arrangements with both individuals and groups.

INFORMAL CARE INITIATIVE

Background

Day care is a service that provides child care primarily for working parents. While traditionally day care has been regarded as a government-regulated service, the majority of parents secure service provided by the informal or unlicensed caregiver. Children receiving day care in an informal arrangement are cared for by friends, relatives or neighbours.

The attractions of informal care are perceived to be the relatively low fees, close proximity to the home, more flexible hours than centre care and the appeal of a family setting. However, informal caregivers are frequently isolated from the resources and information available to the day care community. They may have few resources at their disposal and have varying levels of expertise in child rearing.

In most instances, parents who need to find unregulated care are dependent upon word of mouth, public notice boards and newspaper advertising. It is often difficult for parents to evaluate the service rendered or find service compatible with their own views on child rearing. For this reason, many parents would benefit from information to assist them in finding and evaluating child care arrangements, and accessing child care support services particularly in rural areas.

In essence, these types of informal care arrangements constitute a large child care 'underground' with few support services which are difficult for parents to establish contact with and to evaluate. To assist both parents and caregivers involved in informal care arrangements, the Ministry is sponsoring the informal care initiative.

Purpose

The basic purpose of this initiative is to stimulate the development of informal care support services specifically designed to enhance and compliment the quality and scope of community child care services.

Objectives:

1. to increase access for caregivers to information and resources appropriate to the provision of informal day care.

2. to provide support services beneficial to children receiving informal care.

3. to increase contact among caregivers as a form of mutal support and development.

4. to provide information to parents regarding the location and evaluation of child care services in order to facilitate access.

Projects must have one or more of these objectives as program goals to be considered for funding. Examples of services that incorporate these objectives might include play groups, newsletters, drop-in centres, toy lending libraries, training for providers and day care registries and child care resource centres.

Funding Approach

Funding for these projects will be provided for under The Ministry of Community and Social Services Act. It will be possible to provide two kinds of funding:

- Sustaining support: this type of support is meant to ensure the survival of a program for a specified length of time. The funding is to cover approved costs of the program.

- Project support: this kind of support will be a one-time payment for a specific program or item.

Projects will be funded through a proposal submission and approval process carried out by local Ministry offices.

Evaluation

One purpose of this two-tiered approach to funding is to allow the development of relatively long-term projects, the effectiveness of which can be formally evaluated by the Ministry. Another is to encourage the development of many small efforts that will be less formally evaluated but may have a "spin-off" effect over time through the rapid infusion of new ideas into the informal care sector.

Those submitting proposals for sustaining support must include in the submission plans for evaluating the effectiveness of the project. Requirements in more detail are included in the criteria section.

Submissions made for project support need not include formal plans for evaluation. However, it is expected that a format for evaluating the result of the project would be agreed upon between the Ministry and the project sponsors.

Funding Criteria

The following criteria will be applied:

1. Compatibility with stated objectives, and a clearly demonstrated day care purpose:

   Projects may legitimately serve groups other than caregivers and working parents, for example non working mothers may also benefit from services that provide information on child development. Projects therefore need not focus exclusively on providers and consumers of informal day care in order to be considered for funding. However, since these funds are intended to enhance informal day care support services, only that portion of a program which serves a demonstrated day care purpose will be considered for funding.

2. Non-profit status:

   Those submitting proposals for these funds will, however, be required to demonstrate that the proposed project will operate on a non-profit basis. No consideration will be given to profit-making ventures.

3. Small scale of operation, preferably involving no more than two salaried staff:

   There are two reasons that projects are to be relatively small. First, the kinds of projects that will receive priority are not labour intensive. A small number of staff should be able to carry out these functions effectively. Second, it is intended that these funds may support or help to support as great a number of new ideas and projects as possible.

4. Documentation of the need for the proposed service and presence of the target group within the service area: the general target group is defined as informal (unregulated) day care providers, the parents who use or are seeking their services and parents who are at home with their children.

On two issues, the local offices of the Ministry may establish additional criteria to define tne target population.

a) Level of existing formal services

Some areas of the province have no existing day care services or very minimal services. Local offices may give preference to projects originating from these under-serviced areas.

b) Specific target groups within the general target population:

The local offices are best equipped to determine whether specific groups within the region's general population should receive priority for these projects, e.g., projects serving low income families, single parents, ethnic or rural populations, "high risk" and isolated groups.

5. Intent to serve large populations:

The types of projects that are most likely to receive support are those that will benefit a substantial number of parents, providers and children through direct provision of a service.

6. Groups requesting sustaining support must include the following:

- o a program and financial forecast of the first year's operation and projections of the second year's operation.
- o description of the relationship to be established with similar and complementary services already existing in the service area, ie. Public Health, recreation and education, and formal day care services.
- o if the project sponsor administers other services, an outline of those services and a description of their intended relationship to the proposed day care project.
- o a plan for evaluating project effectiveness, including:
  - a) Statement of program objectives
  - b) Description of how program elements relate to objectives
  - c) Description of measures to be used in obtaining project effectiveness
  - d) Outline of means of data collection.

Project Examples

1. Sustaining Support

Following are descriptions of the types of projects that could be funded on a sustaining basis. Many of the activities described could be carried out in other types of projects as well. A child care resource centre may include a variety of these activities appropriate to the needs of specific communities or rural areas.

Drop-in Program

Drop-in programs can provide a central space where a community's parents and caregivers meet and learn from each other and where the children they care for can have a play group experience.

A project of this type might establish a toy-lending service, sponsor workshops or provide information; assist caregivers to establish networks of mutual support among themselves; provide parents with information on choosing good day care.

Child Care Registry

To operate a child care registry, the project would include the collection of information regarding existing child care resources, establish a list of both formal and informal services and the provision of this service information to parents seeking care. Service listings could include informal caregivers, licensed group and private home day care programs, kindergarten and recreation programs, and parent/child drop in programs.

Toy Lending Library

A toy lending service would make available a variety of suitable toys, an assortment of supplies, books, equipment and information to a community. The toy lending service can relieve some financial burden of the caregivers and parent and enhance the quality of care provided.

In areas where public transportation is limited, a small bus or van could provide a broad geographical area with the services of a mobile toy lending library.

This mobile toy lending library could operate as a mini resource centre, bringing a variety of information and program activities including workshops and playgrounds.

2. Project Support

It is anticipated that funds granted for project support would be used in one of two ways:

- For the purchase of specific equipment or services by groups with other sources of primary funding in order to enrich their service delivery, For example:

  Newsletter or Monthly Bulletin

  An existing group or agency might request funds to begin production of a newsletter directed to caregivers and parents. In such a project, the group would need to demonstrate its capability to continue production using other resources.

  Neighbourhood Caregiver Registry

  Some working parents of pre-school age children may prefer a combination of a morning nursery school program and informal care in the afternoon. To meet this need, a nursery school might purchase short-term staffing services to recruit nearby caregivers willing to provide day care in the afternoons to the nursery school children. The names of these caregivers would become part of a registry kept by the school as a service to parents. These caregivers could then be encouraged to become acquainted with the nursery school operation to ensure some continuity for the children between their morning and afternoon arrangements. In this type of project, the staff services purchased would be necessary only until the roster was established. Regular nursery school staff could then maintain the service.

- To produce a single item, activity or event that may or may not be intended to result in an ongoing activity. For example:

  Manual/Booklet

  The publication costs of a manual or booklet providing information of interest to caregivers and/or parents involved in private arrangements.

Equipment Lending

Purchase of play equipment or other supplies by groups operating programs that serve the caregiver and/or parent. Possible items would be cots and infant equipment available to caregivers on a loan basis.

Workshops

Provision of funds to organize a workshop for caregivers and/or parents. Costs might include honoraria for speakers, rental of conference room, and staff to provide child care.

PUBLIC EDUCATION INITIATIVE

Background

Often parents must use a combination of day care services to cover their hours away from the home. Selecting and coordinating these arrangements requires considerable knowledge and skill. Readily available and up-to-date information on the options available would ease the difficulty for many parents.

Caregivers also have information needs. Those involved in informal arrangements frequently work in isolation and may be unaware of resources and information that could help them provide a better and more rewarding service. Those involved in formal arrangements can benefit from enhanced access to a variety of educational resources.

Purpose

This initiative will focus on the information needs of parents and caregivers and those persons interested in the well-being of children in day care. The broad purpose of the public education initiative is to enhance public and parent awareness regarding day care, including the selection and monitoring of various child care arrangements and the provision of child care and child development information.

Objectives

1. to increase public awareness of what constitutes good day care.
2. to enhance parents' abilities to locate and evaluate day care arrangements.
3. to provide child care and child development information to both parents, caregivers and others involved in the care of children.

Projects must have one or more of these objectives as project goals to be considered for funding. These funds will be used to support public education endeavours including conferences, seminars, workshops and consultation related to day care, as well as the distribution of audio-visual or written materials that have an educational goal directly related to the enrichment of child care services.

Funding Approach

Funding for these projects will be provided for under The Ministry of Community and Social Services Act. Projects will be funded through a proposal submission and approval process carried out by the Regional offices of the Ministry.

Funding Criteria

The following criteria will be applied:

1. Compatability with stated objectives.
2. Description of the unmet need of the target population and the manner in which this was determined.
3. Description of project purpose and objectives.
4. Description of activities to be undertaken with respect to:
   a) Developmental stages of the project
   b) Cost breakdown
   c) Medium to be used eg. workshop, pamphlet, audio-visual, manuals
   d) Extent of coverage or distribution
   e) Table of Contents or outline
   f) Marketing strategy

Requirements for Budgetary Information

The budgetary information to be submitted must include:

A. Projected Expenditure

Salaries and Wages
Benefits
Office supplies and equipment
Telephone
Postage
Advertisement and Promotion
Photocopy
Product Specifications: example for printing - size, number of pages, number of colours, method of binding, typesetting and quantity
Other Project Costs

B. Projected Revenues

All amounts and sources of projected revenue for the project including in-kind contributions, fees charged and purchase price charged.

PRIVATE HOME DAY CARE INITIATIVE

Background

Supervised private home day care programs have been operating in Ontario for more than a decade. Private home day care is the temporary care of five children or less under the age of 10 years where such care is provided in a private residence, other than the home of a parent or guardian of any such child, for a continuous period not exceeding 24 hours.

The private home where care is offered is under the supervision of a private home day care agency. This umbrella agency oversees the provision of private home day care at more than one location. It performs the role of selecting homes, appropriately matching a child, and provides support, training and supervison to its providers. Homes under this supervision are approved and the agency is regulated under The Day Nurseries Act.

Purpose

The broad purpose of this initiative is to stimulate the development of private home day care programs in such a way as to increase the availability of this form of service for infant care and improve accessibility to full fee-paying parents. In recognition of both the time and resources necessary to initiate this type of program, the Ministry will make funds available to approved projects. Funds will cover the administrative and program costs associated with the start-up phase of new programs or similar costs for existing agencies wishing to extend their services for fee-paying parents. The intent of the initiative is to assist a service to reach a position of financial self-sufficiency by funding the program costs until full enrollment permits revenues to match expenses.

Objectives

1. to stimulate the initial development of private home day care programs having the expressed priority of increasing service to infants

2. to support the development of those programs that are cost competitive and therefore have the capacity to serve children of full fee-paying parents

3. to support the development of a variety of financially viable program models to extend parental choice.

While the primary intent is to increase the availability of service for infants, it is recognized that resources can be deployed most efficiently if at least some portion of spaces can be utilized for pre-school or school-aged children as well. This age mix can also be seen as desirable from a program standpoint.

Funding Approach

Funding for these projects will be provided for under The Ministry of Community and Social Services Act. Projects will be eligible for funding for a period of one year and only program and administrative costs will be eligible for funding. It is expected that provider fees will be the responsibility of parents unless a purchase of service agreement with the municipality can be arranged for those parents in need of assistance with the costs of care.

Funding Criteria

In addition to adherence with the stated objectives of the initiative, proposals will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria and requirements:

1. Proposed scale of operation - priority will be given to small scale operations involving no more than two home visitors and one part-time clerical support staff.

2. Projected percentage of infants to be served.

3. Background experience and/or qualifications of proposed home visitor staff.

4. Evidence that the need and market for the service likely exists within the geographic area to be served; e.g. waiting lists, previous needs studies, interviews with local industries.

5. Documentation of current rates of centre-based care and informally arranged care within the geographic area to be served.

6. Proposed plan with respect to the number of children to be placed in each home, the intended mix of ages and a description of the administrative cost implications of this plan, e.g. impact on home visitor travel and workload costs associated with the anticipated number of children per home.

7. Financial and program forecast for one year that includes at least the following:

   a) Homes to be located per quarter
   b) Number of children to be placed per quarter and associated revenues to be received
   c) Number of children to be placed per home
   d) Proposed provider rates
   e) Proposed administrative and program costs per child per day calculated on the expected enrollment at year end

8. Documentation must be supplied to indicate that fee-paying parents will be prepared to pay the cost of projected administrative/program costs if greater than local provider rates.

9. Description of activities to be undertaken (if any) with respect to:

   a) Recruitment of providers and children to be served
   b) Training and support of providers (initial and on-going)
   c) Program activities for children
   d) Back-up system in case of provider illness or unavailability
   e) Financial record keeping system to be used

Requirements for Budgetary Information

In order that the financial viability of the proposal can be adequately determined, the budgetary information to be submitted must include:

A. Projected Expenditure

Salaries and wages
Benefits
Provider fees (if paid through the program's administration)
Allowance for Uncollectible Accounts
Accommodation
Insurance
Telephone
Utilities
Office Supplies
Office Equipment
Travel
Advertisment and Promotion
Program supplies
Other program costs (categorize if greater than 5% of total)

In addition to presentation of the total annual budget, projected expenditures per category per quarter should be included.

B. Projected Revenue

All amounts and sources of projected revenue for the year, including in-kind contributions, should be shown and the expected total from parent fees per quarter should be included.

C. Financial Calculations

1. Projected administrative and program costs per child per quarter

$$\frac{\text{Cost per quarter}}{\text{Proj. number of enrolled days of care per quarter}} =$$

2. Projected deficit per quarter

Costs minus parent fee revenue per quarter =

Generally speaking, it is being anticipated that projects should be in the financial position at the beginning of the fourth quarter where parent fees amount to at least 85% of related program and administrative costs.

OPERATIONAL START-UP ASSISTANCE AND CAPITAL START-UP ASSISTANCE

Background

Non-profit groups and organizations have developed over a third of the day nurseries in the province. In keeping with the commitment to promote a diversity of service sponsorship and program philosophies the Ministry recognizes the importance of a viable non-profit sector in the day nursery field. Programs operated by parent or employee/employer board and serving a primarily fee-paying parents are of particular interest. Non-profit programs and other organizations have, however, indicated that the lack of assistance with initial start-up costs acts as a significant obstacle to the development of such programs.

Establishment of a non-profit day nursery requires a high level of commitment of time and energy on the part of the sponsoring organizations. If financial assistance is not available, few groups persevere to develop a program. For those centre-based programs that are established, some time is required before they reach break-even enrollment. Depending on the location of the program, this may take anywhere from one month to more than a year. The operating deficit incurred during this period must be offset either by donations or by indebtedness that must be retired through higher parent fees. These higher fees may jeopardize the ability of the program to attract fee-paying parents. The provision of operational start-up assistance can support non profit day care centres which demonstrate a high level of commitment in the initial start up phase.

Purpose

The broad purpose of this initiative is to promote the development of non-profit day care programs operated by parent or employee/employer boards. Recognizing the financial obstacles to the development of such programs, the Ministry will provide assistance to cover the operating deficits incurred by approved projects during the initial months of operation. This funding will assist programs to reach a position of financial self-sufficiency.

Objectives

1. to stimulate the development of programs in under-serviced areas of the province.

2. to promote the development of programs likely to serve a high proportion of fee-paying parents.

3. to promote the development of work related day care programs with the co-operation and involvement of the employee.

4. to promote the development of projects that make use of existing community facilities with vacant space.

5. to assist programs to keep their fees cost-competitive, thereby increasing their ability to attract fee-paying parents.

6. to extend the range of services available to parents and promote a greater role for parents in the development and operation of the services their children receive.

Funding Approach

Funding for these projects will be provided under The Ministry of Community and Social Services Act.

Approved applications may receive a grant equal to:

- up to one month's salary for the supervisor of the program prior to opening a centre.

- up to the amount of fee revenue the program would receive if it were operating at full child care capacity for up to two months.

The fee used to calculate the grant must be approved by the Ministry.

The grant will be paid after the program has received or is in the process of receiving a license to operate a day nursery.

Funding Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. Applicants must be incorporated as non-profit corporations. They may be incorporated as:

   a) Parent co-operatives

   b) Employee/employer boards

   c) Non-profit corporations whose constitutions require the board of directors to have a majority representation of parents with children in the centre.

2. There must be a documented need and market for the program serving primarily the full fee-paying parent in the geographical area to be served. Documentation should include a survey or current rates of centre-based care and informally arranged care in the area.

3. Proposed programs should plan to serve a high proportion of fee-paying parents. Application for operating subsidies will reduce the chances of receiving start-up assistance.

4. Preference will be given to proposals with demonstrated community or employer support. Support can be demonstrated through means such as:

   - o Grants or donations from local businesses, local governments, service clubs, or community organizations
   - o Commitment to provide a location for the centre at reduced or no rent
   - o Volunteer commitment to engage in activities such as fund raising, carrying out needed renovations or building equipment.

5. Preference will be given to proposals that will make use of existing space in public buildings such as schools, churches, community centres, or, in the case of proposals from employee/employer boards, space contributed by the employer.

6. Preference will be given to proposals concerning work-related day care that may include on-site day care, private home day care, referral services or family emergency services.

Documentation Requirements

In order that proposals can be assessed for accordance with eligibility criteria and for the likelihood of becoming financially viable, each application must be accompanied by the following documentation:

1. A brief description of the type of program planned — (ages to be served, size, location).

2. Copies of letter's patent.

3. The names and occupations of the members of the current Board of Directors.

4. Documentation of the need and market for the program in the geographical area. Information provided should include the estimated number of children in each age group to be served by the program, the location of the children in relation to the program and transportation routes, and indication of the rate that parents are willing to pay and an estimate of the number of families requiring financial assistance with day care costs.

   This information can be obtained in a variety of ways:

   - Surveys of families with children or employees in the case of work-related day care
   - Response to questionnaires printed in community newspapers or distributed as flyers
   - Evidence of waiting lists at nearby centres
   - Demographic data
   - Some form of survey of existing programs, and private care givers to determine the going rate for child care

5. A plan to publicize the program, both prior to and after opening in order to involve families in the development of the program and enroll prospective children.

6. Documentation of any donations (time, equipment, money) to be made by the sponsoring organization, other community organizations, or the employer/employee.

7. Plan to make use of existing space if available at a reduced or no rent. This should be accompanied by a letter from the provincial early childhood education consultant (Program Advisor) outlining the number of children who could be accommodated and the general nature of any renovations required.

8. An operating budget showing full enrollment, operating costs and anticipated revenues.

9. The proposed parent fee.

Requirements for Budgetary Information

All applications for a day care centre must be accompanied by an operating budget. The budget must include projected expenditures for the categories indicated below and projected revenues from parent fees and other sources to assist in budget preparation. Approximate figures for some categories of expenses have been provided. Please note that the figures provided are guidelines only and may not reflect actual costs.

1. Annual Operating Expenditures

   a) Salaries

      Supervisor
      Teacher(s)
      Assistant Teachers
      Casuals
      Clerical/Administrative
      Kitchen caretaking

      The Ministry's Early Childhood Education Consultants (Program Advisors) will provide advice on staff requirements.

   b) Benefits

      Allow up to 12% of salary costs

   c) Staff Travel Expenses

   d) Staff Development

      Allow up to $200 for attendance at conferences.
      Allow up to $20.00 per full-time staff.

   e) Payment for Consultation on a Fee-for-Service Basis

      In this category, include costs for bookkeeping and audit services. Costs for other services may be included.

   f) Health Supplies and Services

      Include the costs of purchasing and maintaining a First Aid Kit, the cost of diapering young children, the cost of cleaning rugs, drapes, blankets and sheets, as well as the cost of laundry done in machines. Costs in this area range from $15.00 to $21.00 per year per child.

   g) Transportation (children)

      Include costs for field trips and emergency taxi service or ambulance. Costs range from $10.00 to $12.00 per child per year.

h) Playroom Supplies

Include costs of creative supplies such as paper, paint, paste, puzzles and table toys, etc. Costs range from $35.00 to $38.00 per child per year.

i) Property Operation and Maintenance

Rent
Repairs and maintenance
Utilities not included in rent
Property taxes

j) Equipment Repairs and Maintenance

k) Cleaning and Housekeeping Supplies

Costs range from $14.00 to $16.00 per child per year.

l) Office Supplies and Expenses

Costs range from $10.00 to $20.00 per child per year.

m) Telephone

n) Advertising and Promotion

Include costs for advertising for enrollment and staff

o) Employer Contribution for Work Related Day Care eg. space, financial support, equipment, upkeep, renovatoins

p) Other

q) Total Operating Expenditures

This is the total of expenses a) to o).

2. Calculation of per space costs

In calculating the Per Space Cost, a 10% allowance has been made for absenteeism, under-enrollment and bad debts.

Step One: Determine the budget base by subtracting 10% of the spaces from the number of spaces in the program

Step Two: Divide Total Operating Expenditures by the number of spaces in the budget base. This will give the Annual Per Space Cost.

Step Three: Divide the Annual Per Space Cost by 12. This will give the Monthly per Space Cost.

3. Determination of Monthly Parent Fee

Step One: Estimate the amount of revenues the program will receive from other sources (fund raising, donations, etc). Subtract this from Total Operating Expenditures. This gives the amount of Revenue from Parent Fees.

Step Two: Divide the amount of Revenue from Parent Fees by the number of spaces in the program. This gives the Annual Parent Fee.

Step Three: Divide the Annual Parent Fee by 12. This gives the Monthly Parent Fee. The Monthly Parent Fee derived from this calculation will be used to determine the amount of the start-up grant.

In the case of other types of work-related day care similar operating budgets would be submitted detailing appropriate expenditures for salaries and benefits, physical space and administration.

Capital Start-Up Assistance

In addition to operational start-up assistance, the Ministry has allocated funds to assist with reasonable capital costs associated with starting a new non profit program or expanding an existing program. This assistance will cover up to 80% of approved costs, subject to negotiation by each individual project with the Ministry.

Additional documentation required from applicants for capital assistance includes:

1. A letter from the provincial early childhood education consultant (Program Advisor) outlining basic renovations and equipment required for licensing purposes.

2. Estimated costs for renovations and equipment, with supporting evidence (e.g., contractor's estimates, equipment prices from catalogues).

3. A description of any "in kind" contributions to be made by the sponsoring organizations (e.g., labour for carrying out renovations).

4. A description of how the 20% or more of costs not covered by the funds for assistance will be raised.

Proposals which indicate the ability to raise capital funds in excess of the 20% will be given consideration at the time of selection.

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